

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

*12-23-04*

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name **Garden Homes Historic District**  
other names/site number

**2. Location**

street & number **Roughly bounded by South Wabash Avenue to the west, East 87<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, South Indiana Avenue to the east and East 89<sup>th</sup> Street to the south**  
\_\_\_\_\_ Not for publication

city or town **Chicago** \_\_\_\_\_ **X** vicinity

state **Illinois** code **IL** county **Cook** code **031** zip code **60619**

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide  locally. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*Wani C. ...* **SIAPO** \_\_\_\_\_ **12/21/04**  
Signature of certifying official Date

**Illinois Historic Preservation Agency**

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau American Indian Tribe

Name of Property **Garden Homes Historic District**

County and State **Cook/Illinois**

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

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I. hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<u>      </u> entered in the National Register <u>      </u> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<u>      </u> determined eligible for the National Register <u>      </u> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<u>      </u> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<u>      </u> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<u>      </u> other (explain):	_____	_____

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#### 5. Classification

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Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private  
 public-local  
 public-State  
 public-Federal

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)  
 district  
 site  
 structure  
 object

Number of Resources within Property  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>  88  </u>	<u>  64  </u>	buildings
<u>   0  </u>	<u>   0  </u>	sites
<u>   0  </u>	<u>   0  </u>	structures
<u>   0  </u>	<u>   0  </u>	objects
<u>  88  </u>	<u>  64  </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register **N/A**

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Name of Property **Garden Homes Historic District**

County and State **Cook/Illinois**

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## 6. Function or Use

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Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

**Domestic/single dwelling**

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

**Domestic/single dwelling**

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## 7. Description

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Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals**

**Other: Medieval English cottage**

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation **concrete**

Roof **asphalt shingles**

Walls **brick (detached houses), stucco (duplexes)**

other

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**See Continuation Sheets**

Name of Property **Garden Homes Historic District**

County and State **Cook/Illinois**

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### 8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

#### Criterion A: Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance **1919-1920**

Significant Dates **1919-1920**

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) **N/A**

Cultural Affiliation **N/A**

Architect/Builder **Frost, Charles S., Architect    Bright & Diamond, Builder**

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) **See Continuation Sheets**

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**See Continuation Sheets**

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data

 State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency Local government University OtherName of repository: **Chicago Historical Society****10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 40 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing
1	<u>16</u>	<u>448.141</u>	<u>4620.659</u>	3 <u>16</u> <u>448.481</u> <u>4620.313</u>
2	<u>16</u>	<u>448.471</u>	<u>4620.679</u>	4 <u>16</u> <u>448.141</u> <u>4620.313</u>
	<input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.			

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**See Continuation Sheet**

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**See Continuation Sheet**

Name of Property **Garden Homes Historic District**

County and State **Cook/Illinois**

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**II. Form Prepared By**

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name/title **Jean Guarino, Historical Consultant**

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date **July 1, 2004**

street & number **950 N. Leavitt Street** telephone **773.252.9734**

city or town **Chicago** state **Illinois** zip code **60622**

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:  
Continuation Sheets

Maps  
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs  
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Property Owner**

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(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name **multiple property owners**

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Garden Homes Historic District, Cook County, Illinois**

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**7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

The Garden Homes Historic District occupies an approximately 40-acre site in Chicago's Chatham community area, which is located 10 miles south of the city's central business district. The District is roughly bounded by 87<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, 89<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, the west side of Indiana Avenue on the east, and Wabash Avenue on the west.

The site of the Garden Home District was undeveloped when acquired by Chicago merchant Benjamin J. Rosenthal in 1919, as was much of the surrounding area. However, Chatham was on the brink of a decade-long residential building boom that was fueled by manufacturing growth. Newly established factories along the Illinois Central tracks to the east, and between 83<sup>rd</sup> and 87<sup>th</sup> Streets to the north, supplied an influx of residents to Chatham, where population increased from 10,000 in 1920 to more than 36,000 by 1930.<sup>1</sup> Numerous apartment buildings, bungalows and commercial structures were erected in Chatham during the 1920s, a decade in which Irish and Swedes replaced Hungarians as the community's predominant nationality group.

When completed in 1920, the Garden Homes Historic District featured 154 residential buildings: 133 detached homes and 21 duplexes or "double homes" with common party walls, which were placed one, two, or three to a block. The residences were set back about 30 feet from the street, and situated on unusually large lots by Chicago standards, measuring 30 by 162 ft., as opposed to the standard 25 by 125 ft. lot. The large lots were meant to provide not only ample light and air, but space for gardens to cultivate home grown vegetables. As originally developed, the building lots did not include garages. Therefore, garages are not included in the resource count.

Designed by architect Charles S. Frost, the Garden Homes comprised a picturesque array of two-story brick cottages and stucco-clad duplexes featuring a unity of design, materials and scale. These modest workers homes measured approximately 22 ft. wide by 26 ft. deep, with the duplexes measuring approximately 44 ft. wide by 26 ft. deep. All homes were based on the same five-room floor plan, which called for a living room and a combination kitchen and dining room on the first floor, along with three small bedrooms and a bathroom on the second floor. Hollow tile was used to construct the homes, all of which had full basements.

The brick-clad detached cottages all featured symmetrically arranged front facades with a door and window on the first floor and two windows placed directly above them on the second floor. The six-over-six wood sash windows were surrounded by decorative brickwork. Some of the homes were built with open, shed-roofed porches—either full-façade or sheltering the front door only—supported by three pairs of unadorned wooden posts. A charming irregularity of appearance was achieved through the use of five different rooflines that were variations on either the hipped or gabled roof. These included the following designs:

- A steeply pitched front-gable roof featuring a slight hip at the gable apex.

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<sup>1</sup> Steven Neufeld and Annie Ruth Leslie. *Community Area 44: Chatham*. In: The Chicago Fact Book Consortium, ed. *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1990*. (Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1995)142.

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**Garden Homes Historic District, Cook County, Illinois**

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- A steeply pitched side-gabled roof with the front facade slope interrupted by a shed-roofed projection above the two second story windows.
- A steeply pitched hipped roof with the front facade slope interrupted by a gable-roofed projection above the two second story windows.
- A moderately pitched hipped roof with ridgeline; the front facade slope stops just above the two second floor windows and is shorter than the other three, and
- A moderately pitched hipped roof with ridgeline; the front facade slope is interrupted by a smaller hipped-roof projection above the two second story windows.

The stucco-clad duplexes or "double houses" shared a common party wall, and each side was a mirror image of the other. Each side of the duplex featured a pair of six-over-six wood sash windows on both the first and second stories, placed one above the other, a narrow ventilation opening at the attic level, and a steeply pitched front-gabled roof. At the corner of each duplex was a recessed open porch with an arched opening along the front, and a rectangular opening along the side, which sheltered the front door.

The Garden Homes' physical resemblance to the cottages built in the villages of medieval England constitutes the most striking similarity between the 1919-20 Chicago subdivision and the contemporary garden suburbs of London. In fact, the Garden Homes' stucco-clad duplexes featuring steeply pitched front-gabled roofs are nearly identical to homes designed for the garden suburbs of Letchworth and Hampstead. The picturesque array of brick-clad cottages with their varying rooflines is also reminiscent of the cottages erected in the English garden suburbs. The Garden Homes' cohesive appearance, uniform setbacks, and unusually large lots intended to accommodate gardens were other aspects derived from Ebenezer Howard's vision of the garden city. (See section titled "Origins of the Garden City/Suburb Movement" in No. 8 – Narrative Statement of Significance for more information.)

The Garden Homes Historic District has maintained its historic cohesiveness through the years, with no later intrusions, and only three tear-downs. Tear-downs comprised two detached homes (8727 and 8745 S. Wabash) and one-half of a double-house (8846 S. Wabash). In addition, two former detached homes have been visually joined by an aluminum-sided addition between the two (8854 and 8858 S. Michigan), creating a duplex. As a result, the District currently contains 151 residential buildings: 130 detached homes and 21 duplexes. A continuity of the streetscape is achieved through the Garden Homes' uniform, 30-foot setbacks with grassy lawns, and parkways featuring rows of mature trees. Although many of the homes have experienced exterior alterations through the years, the ensemble has largely retained its unity of design, materials and scale.

Although most buildings exhibit their original brick or stucco cladding materials, a number of front facades have been covered with siding, the most common of which are aluminum and simulated "stone." These changes are likely reversible in most cases. On some detached homes, the brick cladding on the front, and sometimes the side, elevations has been plastered over and painted. Likewise, the original brick cladding on many of the homes has been painted. Other typical exterior alterations include the replacement of original wood sash windows with aluminum double-hung windows and the



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**Garden Homes Historic District, Cook County, Illinois**

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replacement of the first floor window on some homes with a large picture window, a group of windows, or a door. On some of the double-houses, the formerly recessed corner porches have been enclosed by exterior cladding materials and new front doors added.

The Garden Homes have largely retained their small scale, despite the addition of enclosed front and rear porches on numerous buildings. The original, open porch of many detached homes was later enclosed and sided with aluminum, with openings for a new front door and windows of different types, such as double-hung, casement and picture windows. On some of these porches, their original wooden shed roofs and paired posts remain visible. Other enclosed front porches, however, are completely new and often covered by hipped roofs. Nearly all of the homes have retained their original rooflines.

Of the Garden Homes Historic District's current ensemble of 152 buildings, 88 have been evaluated as "contributing buildings" of noteworthy architectural value to the district, and 64 buildings evaluated as "non-contributing buildings." Buildings categorized as "contributing" have retained their original roofline and door/window configuration on the front façade, despite the addition of aluminum or other material over the original cladding in some cases. Detached homes with a small enclosed porch obscuring either the original first floor window or front door are also seen as "contributing," as a portion of the original first floor façade remains visible. Double-houses that have retained their original paired window openings and at least the outline of one or both of the arched porch openings at the two corners are also considered contributing, even though in some cases the formerly recessed porch has been enclosed.

Those homes categorized as "non-contributing" have experienced alterations to their front façades that have compromised their historic integrity in terms of design and materials. Examples include buildings with full-façade enclosed porches that have replaced both the original door and window on the first floor of the front (street) facade. These porches—typically featuring incompatible siding and windows—greatly detract from the original appearance of the home. In one instance, a one-car garage was added to the front façade of a double-house, completely changing its original appearance. Other alterations rendering a building "non-contributing" include modification of a home's original roofline, which is one of the most distinguishing features of the Garden Homes. For example, the original pitched roofs covering the detached homes at 8759 S. Wabash and 8848 S. Indiana have both been replaced by flat roofs, thereby completely changing their appearance.

**Contributing Buildings within the District**

8714 S. Indiana  
8718 S. Indiana  
8720-24 S. Indiana (double-house)  
8726 S. Indiana  
8732 S. Indiana  
8736 S. Indiana  
8738 S. Indiana

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**Garden Homes Historic District, Cook County, Illinois**

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8742 S. Indiana  
8744-48 S. Indiana (double-house)  
8750 S. Indiana  
8754 S. Indiana  
8758 S. Indiana  
8806 S. Indiana  
8810 S. Indiana  
8812-16 S. Indiana (double-house)  
8828-30 S. Indiana (double-house)  
8834 S. Indiana  
8842 S. Indiana  
8852 S. Indiana  
8858 S. Indiana  
8715 S. Michigan  
8718 S. Michigan  
8719 S. Michigan  
8720 S. Michigan  
8721-25 S. Michigan (double-house)  
8724 S. Michigan  
8731 S. Michigan  
8732-36 S. Michigan (double-house)  
8737 S. Michigan  
8739 S. Michigan  
8742 S. Michigan  
8743 S. Michigan  
8744 S. Michigan  
8748 S. Michigan  
8750 S. Michigan  
8754 S. Michigan  
8755 S. Michigan  
8758 S. Michigan  
8801 S. Michigan  
8802 S. Michigan  
8804 S. Michigan  
8806 S. Michigan  
8807 S. Michigan  
8812-16 S. Michigan (double-house)  
8822 S. Michigan

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Garden Homes Historic District, Cook County, Illinois

8829-31 S. Michigan (double-house)  
8834 S. Michigan  
8837 S. Michigan  
8841 S. Michigan  
8842-46 S. Michigan (double-house)  
8848 S. Michigan  
8852 S. Michigan  
8853 S. Michigan  
8854 S. Michigan (now attached to 8858)  
8858 S. Michigan (now attached to 8854)  
8715 S. Wabash  
8719 S. Wabash  
8720-24 S. Wabash (double-house)  
8721 S. Wabash  
8726 S. Wabash  
8730 S. Wabash  
8731 S. Wabash  
8732 S. Wabash  
8733-37 S. Wabash (double-house)  
8736 S. Wabash  
8742 S. Wabash  
8744-48 S. Wabash (double-house)  
8749 S. Wabash  
8751 S. Wabash  
8755 S. Wabash  
8758 S. Wabash  
8800 S. Wabash  
8804 S. Wabash  
8805 S. Wabash  
8806 S. Wabash  
8807 S. Wabash  
8810 S. Wabash  
8811 S. Wabash  
8812-16 S. Wabash (double-house)  
8815-17 S. Wabash (double-house)  
8825 S. Wabash  
8828-30 S. Wabash (double-house)  
8835 S. Wabash

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**Garden Homes Historic District, Cook County, Illinois**

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8836 S. Wabash  
8842-46 S. Wabash (double-house)  
8848 S. Wabash  
8849 S. Wabash  
8859 S. Wabash

**Non-Contributing Buildings within the District**

8730 S. Indiana  
8800 S. Indiana  
8804 S. Indiana  
8818 S. Indiana  
8822 S. Indiana  
8824 S. Indiana  
8836 S. Indiana  
8840 S. Indiana  
8848 S. Indiana  
8854 S. Indiana  
8714 S. Michigan  
8726 S. Michigan  
8727 S. Michigan  
8730 S. Michigan  
8733 S. Michigan  
8738 S. Michigan  
8745-49 S. Michigan (double-house)  
8751 S. Michigan  
8759 S. Michigan  
8805 S. Michigan  
8810 S. Michigan  
8811 S. Michigan  
8815-17 S. Michigan (double-house)  
8818 S. Michigan  
8819 S. Michigan  
8823 S. Michigan  
8824 S. Michigan  
8825 S. Michigan  
8828 S. Michigan  
8830 S. Michigan  
8835 S. Michigan

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**Garden Homes Historic District, Cook County, Illinois**

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8836 S. Michigan  
8840 S. Michigan  
8843-47 S. Michigan (double-house)  
8849 S. Michigan  
8855 S. Michigan  
8859 S. Michigan  
8714 S. Wabash  
8718 S. Wabash  
8725 S. Wabash  
8738 S. Wabash  
8739 S. Wabash  
8743 S. Wabash  
8750 S. Wabash  
8754 S. Wabash  
8759 S. Wabash  
8801 S. Wabash  
8818 S. Wabash  
8819 S. Wabash  
8822 S. Wabash  
8823 S. Wabash  
8824 S. Wabash  
8829 S. Wabash  
8831 S. Wabash  
8834 S. Wabash  
8837 S. Wabash  
8840 S. Wabash  
8841 S. Wabash  
8843-47 S. Wabash (double-house)  
8852 S. Wabash  
8853 S. Wabash  
8854 S. Wabash  
8855 S. Wabash  
8858 S. Wabash

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**Garden Homes Historic District**

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**8. NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Garden Homes Historic District, located on Chicago's Chatham neighborhood, is locally significant under Criterion A for its community planning and development significance. Built in 1919-20 as the city's first large-scale subsidized housing project, the Garden Homes was an innovative attempt by a group of Chicago philanthropists to provide workmen with homes at prices they could afford. Benefactors who helped subsidize the project, such as Chicago merchant Benjamin J. Rosenthal, firmly believed that home ownership would encourage people to become more efficient workers and better citizens, thereby decreasing opportunities for labor unrest. The period of significance for the Garden Homes Historic District is 1919-20, the years that its current ensemble of 152 residential buildings was constructed.

Certain aspects of Chicago's Garden Homes were likely derived from the contemporary Garden City movement in England, albeit on a considerably smaller scale. The Garden Homes' cohesive appearance, uniform setbacks, and unusually large lots intended to accommodate gardens are reminiscent of Ebenezer Howard's vision of the garden city. However, it is the Garden Homes' physical resemblance to English medieval cottages that constitutes the District's most striking similarity to England's first garden city in Letchworth, and to the garden suburbs of London built in the 1910s.

The Garden Homes Historic District retains its historic cohesiveness, featuring a picturesque array of two-story brick cottages and stucco-clad duplexes or "double-homes," all of which are based on façade designs by architect Charles S. Frost. With their varying rooflines and resemblance to English medieval cottages, Chicago's Garden Homes stand out from the city's predominant housing stock of flat buildings, gable-roofed cottages and bungalows. In addition to their unity of design, materials and scale, the Garden Homes feature a uniform, 30-foot setback from the street. All homes are situated on unusually large lots by Chicago standards, measuring 30 by 162 ft., as opposed to the standard 25 by 125 ft. lot. The large lots were meant to provide not only ample light and air, but space for gardens to cultivate home grown vegetables. Today, the District's ensemble of homes remains intact with no intrusions and only three demolitions. Most have retained their original exterior cladding materials and rooflines.

**Chicago's Garden Homes**

Chicago faced a serious housing crisis in the years immediately following the First World War. In 1920, *The American Architect* reported that the city was short 75,000 to 100,000 homes.<sup>2</sup> Many members of Chicago's working class were inadequately housed in the city's teeming slum districts, mainly comprised of 19<sup>th</sup> century two- and three-flat buildings and cottages. Benjamin J. Rosenthal, head of the newly formed Chicago Housing Association, railed against the city's inadequate housing facilities. In a 4 Feb. 1920 statement to the Chicago Association of Commerce, he reported that: "Half a million persons in Chicago are living like pigs in the slum districts today. People are sleeping, six, eight and ten

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<sup>2</sup> "Weekly Review of Construction Field," *The American Architect*, 28 Jan. 1920.

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**Garden Homes Historic District**

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in a room: men, women and children, many of them not even related to each other. Children are playing in our gutters and alleys."<sup>1</sup>

In response to this situation, the city experienced an unprecedented apartment boom during the late nineteen-teens and twenties. Apartment buildings of varying sizes sprang up in the areas encircling the old settled areas of the city and in vacant prairie lands between outlying railroad communities. Beyond the apartment belt, cheaper lands fell to single-family bungalows. Through construction was not on the scale of flat buildings, over one-hundred-thousand detached homes went up in a decade. And at the outer edges of the city, subdivision took place, bringing into development many of the remaining vacant areas within the city limits.<sup>2</sup>

In July 1919, Chicago merchant Benjamin J. Rosenthal purchased 40 acres at the southeast corner of State and 87<sup>th</sup> Streets from parties represented by the Chicago Title and Trust Company, Trustees, for \$80,000.<sup>3</sup> This parcel of land—the site for the Garden Homes Subdivision—was located in Chatham, a neighborhood located about ten miles south of Chicago's central business district. The Chicago *Economist* referred to Rosenthal's land purchase as, "...the first concrete step on the part of a number of rich men to develop a new community South where people of small means may purchase homes at low prices and on long terms."<sup>4</sup> The "rich men" referred to were members of the Chicago Housing Association, an organization formed by Rosenthal in the summer of 1919 with the ambitious goal of building 10,000 low cost homes throughout the city. The Garden Homes Subdivision in Chatham was intended as their pilot project.

Headquartered in Rosenthal's North American Building at 36 S. State Street, the Chicago Housing Association was governed by a 22-member board that comprised a virtual who's who of Chicago business and industry. Directors J. Ogden Armour, Charles H. Wacker, and William Wrigley, Jr., the chewing gum manufacturer, were among the prominent individuals who brought not only capital but prestige to the enterprise. Most of the Association's directors had strong connections in the fields of building, real estate and finance. Its Executive Committee included Herman H. Hettler, President of a lumber company by the same name; William Grace, a Chicago contractor since 1872; Moses E. Greenebaum, President of Greenebaum Sons Bank & Trust Co. and a Director of the Chicago Title & Trust Co.; and A. Volney Foster, President of U.S. Silica Company.<sup>5</sup>

By August 1919, the Chicago Housing Association released its plans for the proposed Garden Homes Subdivision, which called for the erection of 250 homes to be sold to the workingman on the easiest possible terms. Residential building lots

<sup>1</sup> "Chicago Needs Houses," *The American Architect*, 4 Feb. 1920.

<sup>2</sup> Harold M. Mayer and Richard C. Wade. *Chicago: Growth of a Metropolis*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969) 325-26.

<sup>3</sup> "Home Building Plan," *The Economist*, 5 July 1919: 36.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> The names of the Chicago Housing Association's Directors were obtained from: "Attractive Dwellings Are Planned For City Workers," *Chicago Commerce*, 22 Nov. 1919. Information regarding the professions of these individuals was taken from: A.N. Marquis. *Who's Who In Chicago. The Book of Chicagoans*. (Chicago: A.N. Marquis & Co., 1926).

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were to be unusually large by Chicago standards, measuring 30 by 162 ft., as opposed to the standard 25 by 125 ft. lot. The large lots were meant to provide not only ample light and air, but space for gardens to cultivate home grown vegetables.

Profits from the sale of business frontage along State Street were intended to pay for the cost of the land, thereby allowing the Association to sell the residential lots to workers at a very low figure. The plan required buyers to put ten per cent down, resulting in a balance of \$17.50 a month on \$3,500 houses and \$20 a month on \$4,000 houses, with interest at 5 per cent. Payments could extend over a period of fifteen years. By paying cash for the land and for all materials, and hiring a contractor on a cost plus 2 ½ per cent basis, it was believed that about \$1,500 could be saved on each house—giving the purchaser a \$5,000 or \$5,500 home for \$3,500 or \$4,000.<sup>8</sup>

The entire project was estimated to cost \$1 million, and about \$200,000 was expected to be received as first payments from the purchasers. The 5 July 1919 issue of the *Economist* noted that, "The committee is soliciting individuals to underwrite the additional \$800,000, although an effort will be made to dispose of five per cent bonds through the societies of the various nationalities."<sup>9</sup> By November 1919, *Chicago Commerce* magazine reported that, "The [Chicago] Housing Association is firmly established financially, the money being advanced by the men who are directing the organization. A six per cent bond issue open to the public in \$100 bonds will soon be put on the market as a basis for the financing."<sup>10</sup>

Purchase of property in the Garden Homes development was restricted to small wage-earners with families and unfit housing conditions. According to a 6 August 1919 article in *The American Architect*, any workingman who desired a home of his own without paying inflated prices for a lot and materials could apply at the offices of the Association. "An application will be made out for him, and this will be turned over to a social committee which will investigate the claim, to prevent speculators from taking advantage of the proposition. Then, if the claim is authentic, a home will be erected."<sup>11</sup> In order to prevent speculation on the homes within the new subdivision, buyers had to agree not to resell without the consent of the housing association, which had first option on the property. Each buyer was also required to take out a low cost decreasing premium life insurance policy, to guard against unexpected default on the loans in the event of the death of a breadwinner. Part of each monthly payment on the home was to be diverted by the Association to apply on the insurance premium, and, in the event of death, a deed would be given immediately to the heirs of the home buyer. The face value of the policy, covering the amount due on the new home, would be assigned to the Association.<sup>12</sup>

James F. Basiger, head of the Chicago Housing Association's application department in the North American Building, explained the goal of the project: "The Association feels that if it is made easy for the workingman to own his home, the

<sup>8</sup> "Home Building Plan." *The Economist*. 5 July 1919: 36.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>10</sup> "Attractive Dwellings Are Planned For City Workers." *Chicago Commerce*. 22 Nov. 1919.

<sup>11</sup> "Build Workmen's Homes at Cost." *The American Architect*, 6 Aug. 1919

<sup>12</sup> "Chicago Solving Housing Shortage." *The American Architect*, 23 June 1920.



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bad housing conditions of the working classes will disappear."<sup>13</sup> *Chicago Commerce* magazine, which praised the Garden Homes project as "the most ambitious housing project in the history of Chicago,"<sup>14</sup> noted that:

*"Philanthropy and Americanization are the inspiration of the undertaking, and those it is hoped to benefit are the poorer paid among the laboring classes, men getting less than \$150 a month and struggling to support a family. Many such now live in wretched quarters—houses old and unrepaired and crowded together to a degree that invites sickness and crime.*

*"This project is in no sense commercial. It is intended to stimulate the general movement toward acquiring homes. The Association intends to reach people who, for various reasons, are unable to meet the ordinary commercial requirements."<sup>15</sup>*

Work on the Garden Homes development proceeded at a rapid pace. In November 1919, the 40-acre Chatham parcel was subdivided into 250 lots, 80 of which were located along 87<sup>th</sup> and State Streets, and intended as business frontage.<sup>16</sup> Also in November, the Association applied for building permits for 175 homes (133 detached homes and 21 duplexes) to be erected on both sides of Wabash and Michigan Avenues and on the west side of Indiana Avenue, between 87<sup>th</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup> Streets.<sup>17</sup>

Charles S. Frost, a prominent residential architect in Chicago, was selected by the Chicago Housing Association to design the Garden Homes.<sup>18</sup> Frost produced several designs for the subdivision's picturesque array of two-story brick cottages and stucco-clad duplexes, which featured a unity of design, materials and scale. The homes were to feature six different rooflines, intended to provide irregularity to the otherwise symmetrical front facades. All homes were based on the same five-room floor plan, which called for a living room and a combination kitchen and dining room on the first floor, along with three bedrooms and a bathroom on the second floor. Designs included full basements and furnace heat for all of the

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<sup>13</sup> "Build Workmen's Homes at Cost," *The American Architect*, 6 Aug. 1919.

<sup>14</sup> "Build Homes To Make Good Citizens," *Chicago Commerce*, 2 Aug. 1919.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Cook County Recorder of Deeds Office. The original plat for the Garden Homes Subdivision, dated Nov. 18, 1919.

(Document no. 6675376, Plat Book 158, p. 1) names the Chicago Real Estate Improvement Corporation as the owner of the land covered by the Garden Homes Subdivision.

<sup>17</sup> Permit nos. 55131-38 and 55146-57 dated 26 Nov. 1919 listed the Chicago Housing Association as owner. C.S. Frost was listed as architect on the first permit, no. 55131. The total cost for all homes listed on the permits was \$700,000. Permits were found in South Ledger Book no. 20, pp. 335-39.

<sup>18</sup> Although original architectural drawings were not located for the Garden Homes, Charles S. Frost is listed as architect on the first of the development's building permits and in a variety of contemporary publications, including: *The Economist* (6 Dec. 1919: 1174) and *The American Architect* ("Chicago Solving Housing Shortage," 23 June 1920).

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homes. The houses were to be set back 30 ft. from the street, and due to the 162 foot depth of the lots, there was ample space in the rear for gardens.<sup>19</sup>

All of the Garden Homes were to be constructed with hollow tile, a material increasingly used during the 1910s due to its fire-resistant quality. An article in the 12 Nov. 1919 issue of *The American Architect* discussed the advantages of hollow tile construction:

*"Hollow tile not only possesses fire resisting qualities, which recommend it as a desirable substitute for the all-wood building, but, due to its cellular construction, incorporating within itself an air space, it also possesses an advantage over the solid brick wall of moderate thickness because of its ability to keep out dampness and insulate against heat and cold equally well."*<sup>20</sup>

The article also reported that although brick veneers were often used in combination with hollow tile, the method was inexpensive and not considered entirely satisfactory, due to the challenges of bonding brick and tile of various sizes. However, the application of stucco to the exterior face of the tile wall was praised for "solving the problem of appearance in an entirely satisfactory way." Stucco was a popular cladding material in the 1910s and twenties, as reported in a 15 Oct. 1919 article published as part of *The American Architect's* series titled, "Successful Building in Stucco": "While the use of stucco is ancient, and its adoption has continued in a moderate way through the ages, only in very recent years has it been applied extensively to small houses in the U.S."<sup>21</sup>

The firm of Bright & Diamond, located at 88<sup>th</sup> and State Streets, was selected as general contractor for work on the Garden Homes, which began in December 1919, and continued through what was considered one of the coldest winters Chicago had seen in years. All construction work was done by day labor directed by Bright and Diamond, except the plumbing, sewerage, electrical work, glazing and plastering. The 5 June 1920 issue of *The Economist* noted that construction of the Garden Homes featured economies of large-scale production:

*"There is no large overhead, and because of the large number of houses being built in one neighborhood all the costs and wastes of time incident to moving equipment and crews is obviated. Bricklayers are laying on the average 1,500 bricks a day. Furthermore, building materials were bought late last summer at prices far below what they are now. Very favorable prices were made by lumber and cement interests."*<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> The Garden Homes subdivision features 100-foot-wide streets that were meant to accommodate the installation of parkways, a feature that was never executed.

<sup>20</sup> "Successful Building in Stucco: Hollow Wall Tile Construction," *The American Architect*, 12 Nov. 1919.

<sup>21</sup> "Successful Building in Stucco," *The American Architect*, 15 Oct. 1919.

<sup>22</sup> "Bond Issue of \$700,000," *The Economist*, 5 June 1920: 1244.

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Construction was greatly facilitated by the then innovative method of using steam shovels to dig the foundations. The shovel excavated an entire block of basements at an operation, digging a huge trench in which the concrete foundations were poured in prepared forms, which were used over and over as the building proceeded. It was more efficient and inexpensive to dig the trenches in this way, later filling in between the houses by steam shovel, than to excavate manually or with teams. The construction methods employed in building the Garden Homes were discussed in the 23 June 1920 issue of *The Economist*:

*"Great economies and means of speed were worked out in the system of building employed. As fast as the steam shovel dug and leveled the trenches for basements, and dug the taplines for water and sewer, the concrete crews followed in with their basement forms. Cement mixers were put in operation at the cross street junctions. From these a steady stream of barrowmen took concrete to the basement forms. As fast as the foundations hardened, the brick and tile layers succeeded the foundation men. And as these artisans finished their work the carpenters came on to joist and roof the structures, in turn making room for the various craftsmen to finish and decorate the houses. Thus a force of from 350 to 400 men has been steadily employed."*<sup>23</sup>

Due to the use of efficient construction methods, the Garden Homes Subdivision was completed in record time. By June 1920, the Chicago Housing Association had approved applications for all 175 homes nearing completion.<sup>24</sup> These included 133 detached homes and 21 duplexes or "double homes" with common party walls, which were placed one, two, or three to a block. *The American Architect* noted that with these model homes, "Chicago, it is believed, is finding the solution to the housing problem."<sup>25</sup>

A variety of contemporary business magazines reported that the Garden Homes Subdivision was to be the first of many such developments planned by the Chicago Housing Association in various areas of the city. For example, *The American Architect* stated, "The Housing Association aims, eventually, it is said, to construct between 8,000 and 10,000 houses, providing model modern housing for workers' families in various localities."<sup>26</sup>

Despite initial ambitious plans, it appears that the Garden Homes was the only subdivision of its kind constructed by the Chicago Housing Association. Though most of the houses were quickly sold, problems did develop. Although surface line transportation existed along State and 87<sup>th</sup> Streets, the location remained somewhat remote from downtown Chicago and major transportation facilities.

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<sup>23</sup> "Chicago Solving Housing Shortage," *The American Architect*, 23 June 1920.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. Although initial articles on the Garden Homes reported that 250 homes were projected for the development, only 175 homes were actually built.

<sup>25</sup> "Chicago Solving Housing Shortage," *The American Architect*, 23 June 1920.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

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During the 1930s, a number of homes were foreclosed for nonpayment and taken over by the mortgagors, creating a change in tenancy from owners to renters. A review of various tract book records on file at the Chicago Recorder of Deed's Office shows that following Rosenthal's death in 1936, his foundation and estate continued to deal with many of the properties, buying some back at tax sales. As late as 1940, records indicate they still had an interest in 25 of the houses,<sup>27</sup> but eventually all were sold.

During the 1920s there were no other experiments in Chicago with subsidized housing projects until the end of the decade, when two projects were built almost simultaneously, the Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments and the Marshall Field Garden Apartments. Although one was intended for black tenancy and one white, the two projects are very similar in their concept and design.<sup>28</sup> Both projects were completely different from the Garden Homes idea, however, as they featured large apartment buildings rather than single-family homes and were intended for renters.

**Benjamin Rosenthal**

Chicago's Garden Homes Historic District—a philanthropic venture aimed to help working class residents achieve home ownership—uniquely addressed the social agenda espoused by Chicago merchant Benjamin Rosenthal in the aftermath of the First World War. Rosenthal (1867-1936) was a Chicago native who got his start in the millinery business, later becoming a real estate developer. The son of Herman and Sarah (Benjamin) Rosenthal, he received an elementary and high school education from Chicago's public schools.

Rosenthal began his professional career working for Gage Brothers & Company, Wholesale Millinery from 1884 to 1891,<sup>4</sup> when he associated with Louis M. Stumer and Louis Eckstein under the firm name of Stumer, Rosenthal & Eckstein, Wholesale & Retail Millinery. In 1901, Rosenthal married Stumer's sister Hannah, and the couple eventually had two daughters, Gladys and Elaine. Starting in 1905, he served for many years as president of the Importers' and Manufacturers' Millinery Company.

In 1912, Stumer, Rosenthal & Eckstein erected a 19-story office tower at 36 S. State Street in Chicago's central business district. Called the North American Building, the 19-story Holabird & Roche-designed edifice featured stores on the lower floors and offices above. Offices for the Chicago Housing Association and the Chicago Real Estate Improvement Corporation—organizations critical to the development of the Garden Homes Historic District—were both housed in this building. Retail establishments included the Paris Hat Shop, operated by Rosenthal, and the Emporium World Millinery Company, operated by his father-in-law, Abraham Stumer, and later by Rosenthal and Louis Stumer.

<sup>27</sup> Letter from Ward T. Huston & Co., Real Estate, Chicago, to Benjamin J. Rosenthal Charities, dated 11 Oct. 1940. Private collection of Devereux Bowly, Jr.

<sup>28</sup> Devereux Bowly, Jr. *The Poorhouse: Subsidized Housing in Chicago: 1895-1976*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978).

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In addition to his business interests, Rosenthal was also involved in many social and charitable activities. He belonged to a variety of exclusive Chicago clubs, including the Standard, Illinois Athletic, Lakeside and the Iroquois. Following his marriage, Rosenthal lived in Chicago's Douglas neighborhood at 3647 Michigan Ave until at least 1906. By 1910, Chicago's city directories listed his address as Homewood, where he belonged to the Ravisloe Country Club. Like many wealthy businessmen of the time, Rosenthal also maintained rooms at various downtown hotels over the years, such as the Blackstone (1910, 1914), Wellington (1911) and the Hotel Ambassador (1923).<sup>29</sup>

Many of Rosenthal's charitable activities in Chicago focused on helping the disadvantaged find employment opportunities. He served as Chairman of the Chicago Committee on Unemployment, by appointment of Mayor Thompson. In this position, he helped find positions for hundreds of men residing in Chicago's Municipal Lodging House. Rosenthal also founded the Employment Committee for Men Past 45 Years of Age, the Committee for the Employment of Crippled People and also for the Employment of Colored Women. These committees were all later taken over by the U.S. Department of Labor. In addition, he served as a member of the Chicago Board of Education from 1894-97, and as a Director of the Chicago Association of Commerce.<sup>30</sup>

On the national scene, Rosenthal was a tireless advocate for the establishment for an American Merchant Marine. In 1915, he authored, *The Need of the Hour: An American Merchant Marine*, a volume that was widely circulated. Rosenthal's acquaintance with President Wilson's Treasury Secretary, W.G. McAdoo, likely led to his presidential appointment as a Member of the U.S. Assay Commission, a long-standing committee of American citizens that met each year to examine random samples of U.S. coinage for conformity to standards.

Rosenthal's charitable activities were closely tied to his social and political beliefs, which were discussed in his 1919 book, titled, *Reconstructing America Sociologically and Economically*. The book's ambitious objectives were summarized in its Preface, written by E.H. Carqueville:

*"This book deals with the things that are vital to a reconstruction of the world's activities on the high octave struck in Woodrow Wilson's program of world democracy. The rise of Bolshevism translated into the slaughter of opposing classes calls for a right solution of earth's economic problems, and this book outlines them clearly. It points the way, a reasonable demonstrated middle course between confiscation of property and the murderous wiping out of ruling classes, on the one hand, and stand-pat capitalism on the other, which will yield nothing..."*<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Chicago's *Blue Books* and *Lakeside Directories*.

<sup>30</sup> Biographical information in this paragraph was taken from: Benjamin J. Rosenthal, *Reconstructing America Sociologically and Economically*. (Chicago: Arcadia Book Co., 1919).

<sup>31</sup> Benjamin J. Rosenthal, *Reconstructing America Sociologically and Economically*. (Chicago: Arcadia Book Co., 1919) V

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In the ensuing chapters, Rosenthal outlines what he feels is needed for the "readjustment of our entire social, political and economic structure." He dwells on the importance of the "morale of our people [which] affect our present, and especially our future destiny"...

*"If the people of our nation are not honest, efficient, healthy and prosperous, they cannot be happy, and after all, happiness is the greatest blessing upon earth; a spiritual happiness, a happiness based upon the accomplishment of things not for ourselves alone, but for our fellow men."<sup>32</sup>*

Happiness, to Rosenthal, meant home ownership. Rosenthal firmly believed that home ownership would encourage people to become more efficient workers and better citizens, thereby decreasing opportunities for labor unrest. In the second chapter of his book, which deals with housing, he discussed his notion that a person's bad character is linked to his home environment:

*"If you look around our own city and notice the kind of houses that our working people are obliged to live in, unfit, many of them, to shelter animals, much less humans, do you wonder that for every soldier who died in battle in the war, another life has been wiped out by the deadly plague, tuberculosis?"*

*"Can a workman be efficient if he is crowded in a badly ventilated, badly lighted, unclean house in a congested neighborhood? Can he be happy if he is obliged to occupy living rooms that are unfit for human habitation?"<sup>33</sup>*

Rosenthal also questioned whether it was the role of the government to step in and build houses to take the place of those unfit for occupancy, whether private capital should be secured through the efforts of public-spirited citizens, or whether the trade unions ought to secure capital and build homes and lease or sell them to their workmen on easy installments. Rather than merely railing against Chicago's housing conditions in print, Rosenthal took action in 1919, gathering a group of "public-spirited citizens" to raise funds for the Garden Homes—a 154-building development of modest homes built for the working class at prices they could afford. With the Garden Homes Subdivision, Rosenthal wanted to not only improve housing opportunities for the workingman, he wanted to prove that it could be done with private capital. Following the completion of the Garden Homes Subdivision in 1920, Rosenthal continued to deal with many of the properties, buying some back at tax sales. Rosenthal also became involved in other real estate activities, serving as Chairman of the Republic Realty Mortgage Company and as President of the Central Realty Agency & Loan Company, both headquartered in his North American Building at 36 S. State Street. At the time of his death in 1936, Rosenthal had evidently become quite wealthy, owning residences in Palm Beach, Florida and Biarritz, France.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Rosenthal, IX.

<sup>33</sup> Rosenthal, 5.

<sup>34</sup> An article titled, "SEC Reveals More Large Stock Holdings," in the 23 Jan. 1935 *Chicago Tribune* reported that Benjamin Rosenthal, Chairman of the Chicago Mail Order Co., held stock in that company valued at approximately 2 million dollars. Rosenthal's holdings made him one of the largest stockholders in the company.

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#### Charles S. Frost

Charles S. Frost (1856-1931), the architect of Chicago's Garden Homes subdivision, was one of Chicago's most prominent residential architects from the 1880s through the early 1900s. The son of a mill owner and lumber merchant in Lewiston, Maine, Frost was educated and received architectural training in his native city. After continuing his studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and graduating in 1876, Frost found employment in the Boston office of Peabody & Stearns, where he became acquainted with Henry Ives Cobb.

In 1882, both Cobb and Frost moved to Chicago and established a highly successful architecture practice. The partnership afforded Frost with much success and recognition through the 1880s. In addition to such prominent buildings as the 1885 Chicago Opera House Block at the southwest corner of Clark and Washington Streets (demolished), Cobb & Frost designed many impressive residences for wealthy clients, such as the Studebaker residence in South Bend, Indiana. The firm's most prominent Chicago residential commission was the palatial Potter Palmer mansion on Lake Shore Drive between Banks and Schiller streets (demolished).

Cobb & Frost's extant residential designs in Chicago include the Miner T. Ames House at 1811 S. Prairie (1885) and the Ransom R. Cable House at 25 E. Erie St. (1886), both designated Chicago landmarks. Cobb & Frost also designed the Harriet F. Rees House at 2110 S. Prairie Ave. (1888); the Perry H. Smith House at 1400 N. Astor St. (1887), and the John Howland Thompson House at 915 N. Dearborn (1888). All five of these stately residences were designed in the firm's trademark Richardsonian Romanesque style.

After Cobb & Frost's partnership dissolved in 1889,<sup>35</sup> Frost practiced alone for several years, maintaining an office in the Pullman Building on Michigan Avenue. The passenger station of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway Company at Milwaukee, described in a contemporary publication as "a model of its kind," and the 1891 Western Bank Note Company's Building at 8 S. Michigan Ave. (demolished) were among his notable commissions.

However, Frost remained primarily a residential architect through the 1890s, designing such homes as the Samuel B Steele House at 3123 S. Calumet Ave. (1890) and the Isaac Wedeles House at 3127 S. Calumet Ave. (1890), both Romanesque-style houses built for partners in a wholesale grocery business. Other extant Frost residences are the Edward C. Potter House at 4800 S. Ellis Ave. (1892), which features a brick tower, and the John B Lord House at 4857 S.

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<sup>35</sup> According to the *ALA Guide to Chicago* (NY: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1993) p. 131, Cobb was asked to abandon his partnership with Frost to devote his full attention to his commission for the Newberry Library, built 1890-93.

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Greenwood Ave. (1896), an unusual example of a Colonial Revival style house by Frost. The Cobden apartment building at 418-24 W. Belden Ave. (1892) remains a picturesque flats-above-storefronts building.

That Frost attained success at a young age was evidenced by his inclusion in the 1892 publication titled, *The Biographical and Portrait Gallery of Representative Men of Chicago, Minnesota Cites and the World's Columbian Exposition*:

*"To attain to success and prominence in one's calling before reaching mid-life falls to the lot of comparatively few men...To say that Mr. Frost may be numbered among this favored few is fully warranted, in view of the position to which he had attained while yet a young man...Personally, Mr. Frost possesses qualities of a high order: prompt in business, firm in his friendships, generous, hospitable and charitable, he has attracted to himself a wide circle of friends and acquaintances, who esteem him for his manly character and noble qualities of head and heart."<sup>56</sup>*

In the early 1900s, Frost established a partnership with his brother-in-law Alfred H. Granger, which lasted until 1910. As sons-in-law of Marvin Hughitt, President of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad, Frost and Granger received many commissions and specialized in railroad stations. The firm designed several large terminals in Midwestern cities, of which the most important were the LaSalle Street Station (1901-03) and the Chicago and Northwestern Station (1906-11) in Chicago (both demolished). The firm also designed Union Stations in Omaha, Nebraska and St. Paul, Minnesota.

Frost & Granger's extant Chicago buildings include the Chicago & Northwestern Railway Office (now City Colleges Building) at 226 W. Jackson Boulevard (1904); the Northwestern Terminal Powerhouse at N. Clinton Street, between Milwaukee and W. Lake St. (1911); St. Luke's Hospital at 1435-47 S. Michigan Ave.; the Northern Trust Co. Building at 50 S. LaSalle St. (1905); and the Borland Manufacturing Buildings (now Printers Square Apartments) at 700 and 740 S. Federal Street (1909, 1912), and the Moses Born House at 4801 S. Drexel Boulevard (1901). Frost also continued his residential work during his partnership with Granger, designing many homes in both Chicago and Lake Forest, where he was a long-time resident.

Frost established an independent practice after leaving his partnership with Frost in 1911. In addition to the Garden Homes, his most prominent independent commission in his later years was Chicago's Municipal Pier (now Navy Pier) at Grand Ave. and Lake Michigan. When completed in 1916, Municipal Pier's 3,000 foot length made it the world's largest pier. During its golden age (1918-30), it was an important terminal for freight and passenger traffic, as well as a site of public entertainment.

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<sup>56</sup> *The Biographical and Portrait Gallery of Representative Men of Chicago, Minnesota Cites and the World's Columbian Exposition*. (Chicago and NY: American Biographical Publishing Co., 1892) 87-88.



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A Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, Frost belonged to many social clubs throughout his career, including the Cliff Dwellers, Mid-Day, Union League, and the Onwentsia in Lake Forest. At the time he received the Garden Homes Commission in 1919, Frost maintained an office at 105 S. LaSalle Street in Chicago.

Origins of the Garden City/Suburb Movement

Chicago's Garden Homes Historic District exhibits some of the aesthetics and planning concepts of England's Garden City movement, founded by Ebenezer Howard. Howard was disturbed by the extremes of wealth and power in the great cities of his time, including his native London. He predicted a future in which people would desert the large urban metropolis for a new way of life in a decentralized society comprised of small scale garden cities. In 1898, Howard published the book *Garden Cities of Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, which laid out his ideas regarding the creation of new towns.

In *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, Howard envisioned his garden city as a tightly organized urban center for 30,000 inhabitants, surrounding by a "green belt" of agricultural lands. The garden city was to occupy 1,000 acres in the middle of a 5,000-acre tract reserved for farms and forests. This "agricultural belt" was intended to play an integral role in the economy of the garden city: the 2,000 farmers who live there would supply the town with the bulk of its food. The agricultural belt would also prevent the town from sprawling out into the countryside.

Howard's ideal garden city had a park occupying the city center to accommodate public buildings such as the town hall, library, museum, concert and lecture hall, and the hospital. The park was to be surrounded by residential neighborhoods, each comprised of 5,000 people. The basic unit in the neighborhood is the home surrounded by a garden, and Howard hoped to provide houses with gardens to all classes. The Garden City was also planned to include manufacturing along its periphery, ensuring that factories would be separate from, yet within walking distance to, the residential neighborhoods. In garden city, all of the land and structures were to be collectively owned and leased to individuals.

The key to Howard's strategy was his contention that building a new city could be practical: that money advanced for its construction could be paid back with interest. Funds could thus be solicited from people with the assurance that they would be both helping the cause and earning a modest return for themselves. Garden city was to be built on agricultural land purchased and developed by a limited dividend corporation. The scheme was speculative because it was a gamble on the rise in values that would result from attracting 30,000 people to a plot of empty farmland, and philanthropic because the speculators agreed in advance to forgo all but a fixed portion of the expected profits.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Robert Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century*. (Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1982) 46.

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After publishing *Garden Cities of Tomorrow*, Howard founded the Garden City Association in 1899 to advance his ideas and garner the support to test them in practice. In 1903, the garden city idea gained enough attention and financial backing to lead to the creation of Letchworth, in Hertfordshire, about 35 miles north of London. The 3,800-acre site of Letchworth was purchased by the directors of the Garden City Pioneer Company in June 1903, and in September, the First Garden City Ltd. was established to develop the new community. First Garden City Ltd.—comprised of a board of prominent businessmen—proposed to raise funds for construction by issuing 300,000 pounds in shares, with the annual dividend not to exceed five per cent of their par value.<sup>38</sup>

The partnership of Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker was selected by First Garden City Ltd. as architects for Letchworth. Their vision of the garden city was based on the 14<sup>th</sup> century English village, which they believed was the truest community that England had ever known. Unwin and Parker believed that the cooperative ideal of the garden city was best expressed in a consistent style of architecture, such as the picturesque brick and stucco clad homes with steeply pitched gabled roofs seen in the region surrounding medieval Hertfordshire. The 1,200-acre Letchworth Garden City was to be surrounded by a 2,800-acre agricultural belt, with industry separated from the residential areas.<sup>39</sup>

Although Letchworth remained the only true garden city based on Howard's model, a variety of garden *suburbs* were built in England around 1910 that focused solely on residential development. As at Letchworth, homes built in England's garden suburbs were based on architecture of the medieval English village. One of England's earliest garden suburbs was Hampstead, a 240-acre tract of countryside in Hertfordshire purchased by the Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust, Ltd. in 1907. The Hampstead Garden Suburb Development Company was formed to build houses on the former estate and hired Unwin and Parker as architects, probably due to their experience with Letchworth.

Unwin and Parker prepared the town plan, designed many of Hampstead's early houses, and supervised the plans and elevations of houses designed by other architects. From the start, Edwin Lutyens served as consulting architect and designed many of Hampstead's principal buildings. Based upon the medieval English village, Unwin and Parker's plan for Hampstead featured a cohesive grouping of picturesque cottages and larger houses that featured a uniform setback from the street. Homes were generally built eight to an acre and spaced at least 50 feet apart, with gardens occupying the intervening space. Cost savings in home construction at Hampstead were anticipated through the economy of large-scale development.

Some of England's garden suburbs, such as Hampstead, included moderately priced cottages, while others were clearly intended for those with more substantial incomes, due to their large size and the quality of design and workmanship. A 1910 book on English garden suburbs described their growing popularity:

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<sup>38</sup> Fishman, 65.

<sup>39</sup> Howard lived at Letchworth until 1921, when he relocated to Welwyn, also in Hertfordshire, the second garden city, which was begun in 1919 to test his theory of clustered cities functionally related to one another. Howard was knighted in 1927 and lived at Welwyn until his death in 1928.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 21

**Garden Homes Historic District**

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*"Near London, the migration of well-to-do people to these new suburbs, where rates are lower, gardens larger and the air purer, is being facilitated and encouraged by an enormous increase of transit facilities. We are witnesses of a renaissance of the English village and of English architecture which in the next quarter of a century promises to transform Outer London."<sup>40</sup>*

Certain aspects of Chicago's Garden Homes may have been derived from the contemporary Garden City movement in England, albeit on a considerably smaller scale. As at Letchworth and Hampstead, financing for the Garden Homes was secured solely through private capital, rather than government subsidies. The establishment of a housing association comprised of prominent businessmen to guide the Garden Homes' development, as well as a separate company to acquire the land, was also reminiscent of the planning concepts used to establish various English garden suburbs.

Moreover, the notion of collective ownership of land and property envisioned by Howard and implemented at Letchworth had some resonance in original plans for Chicago's Garden Homes. A contemporary article announcing plans for the Garden Homes noted that, "While each individual will pay for and own his house, there will be a community interest, which will find expression through a community house, which will be built for each group."<sup>41</sup> This aspect of the plan, however, was never executed.

The Garden Homes' physical resemblance to the homes scattered throughout England's medieval villages constitutes the most striking similarity between the Chicago subdivision and the garden suburbs of London. In fact, the Garden Homes' stucco-clad duplexes featuring steeply pitched front gabled roofs are nearly identical to homes designed for Letchworth and Hampstead. The picturesque array of brick-clad cottages with their varying rooflines are also reminiscent of the picturesque cottages erected in the English garden suburbs. The Garden Homes' cohesive appearance, uniform setbacks, and unusually large lots intended to accommodate gardens were other aspects derived from Ebenezer Howard's vision of the garden city.<sup>42</sup>

The garden city was brought to this country by the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA), a small and active group who met regularly for a decade between 1923 and 1933. Membership included many of the giants of urban planning history, such as social critic Lewis Mumford. The RPAA established Sunnyside Gardens in the New York City borough of Queens in 1924-28 as the first garden city experiment in the U.S. The project was a joint venture with the City

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<sup>40</sup> T. Fisher Unwin, *Garden Suburbs: Town Planning and Modern Architecture*. (London: Adelphi Terrace, 1910) 2.

<sup>41</sup> "Build Homes To Make Good Citizens." *Chicago Commerce*, 2 Aug. 1919.

<sup>42</sup> No evidence was found that Benjamin Rosenthal had actually visited Letchworth or the contemporary garden suburbs outside London. He had ample opportunity to do so, however, through his appointment as Special Foreign Commissioner for the National Business League of America, a position that required extensive travel throughout Europe. In addition, Garden Homes architect Charles S. Frost, a prominent residential architect, would almost certainly have been aware of Letchworth and the Garden Suburbs of London, which were widely reviewed in architectural journals of the day.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Section 8 Page 22

**Garden Homes Historic District**

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Housing Corporation, which purchased 77 acres to create a community of 1,201 family units.<sup>43</sup> Intended to provide decent housing at a reduced cost, Sunnyside Gardens was comprised mainly of row houses situated around common courtyards, each of which had its private garden on its rear side. There were also six acres of interior green commons.

In 1928, the City Housing Corporation began construction on what was originally intended as its second garden city. Its subdivision in Radburn, New Jersey, was planned as a series of three neighborhoods of 7,500 to 10,000 people, each with its own elementary school and shopping center.<sup>44</sup> A larger commercial center and industry was to be located on the periphery. Although originally begun as a garden city, few of the critical elements of Howard's plan were included. As with Sunnyside Gardens, Radburn lacked a greenbelt and industry, thereby taking on the character of England's garden suburbs, rather than the garden city envisioned by Howard. Its picturesque houses—modeled on medieval English cottages—were grouped informally through cul-de-sacs.

Today, Chicago's Garden Homes Historic District remains the city's earliest large-scale subsidized housing development and an innovative experiment by some of Chicago's most prominent philanthropists to help workingmen achieve home ownership. The similarity between Chicago's Garden Homes and the residences designed for many of England's contemporary garden suburbs constitutes another fascinating aspect of the District's history. The District's picturesque ensemble of brick cottages and stucco-clad double-houses—all designed by prominent Chicago architect Charles S. Frost—remains intact with no intrusions. Featuring a cohesive appearance, uniform setbacks and unusually large lots, Chicago's Garden Homes Historic District stands out from the city's predominant residential building stock and qualifies for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

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<sup>43</sup> Carol A. Christensen, *The American Garden City and the New Towns Movement*. (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press. )

57.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. 58.

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National Park Service

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**Garden Homes Historic District**

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**Garden Homes Historic District**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Verbal Boundary Description

The Garden Homes Historic District is located in Chicago's Chatham community area. It is bounded by 87<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, 89<sup>th</sup> Street on the south, the west side of Indiana Avenue on the east, and Wabash Avenue on the west. Beginning at the intersection of the alley between South State Street and South Wabash Avenue and the rear lot line of properties along East 87<sup>th</sup> Street running east two and one half blocks, turning ninety degrees heading south along the center of South Indiana Avenue two blocks, turning ninety degrees and heading west along the center of East 89<sup>th</sup> Street for two and one half blocks, turning ninety degrees heading north along the alley between South State Street and South Wabash Avenue to the point of beginning.

The 152 residential buildings within this district (130 detached homes and 21 duplexes) comprise lots 81 to 255 in the Chicago's Garden Homes Subdivision, which is located in the northwest quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 3-37-14, Chicago, Cook County, Illinois. 8714-8758 S. Indiana Ave., 8800-8858 S. Indiana Ave., 8715-8759 S. Michigan Ave., 8714-8758 S. Michigan Ave., 8801-8859 S. Michigan Ave., 8802-8858 S. Michigan Ave., 8715-8759 S. Wabash Ave., 8714-8758 S. Wabash Ave., 8801-8859 S. Wabash Ave., 8800-8858 S. Wabash Ave.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries for the Garden Homes Historic District were chosen because they encompass the total area covered by the Garden Homes housing development, erected in 1919-20.



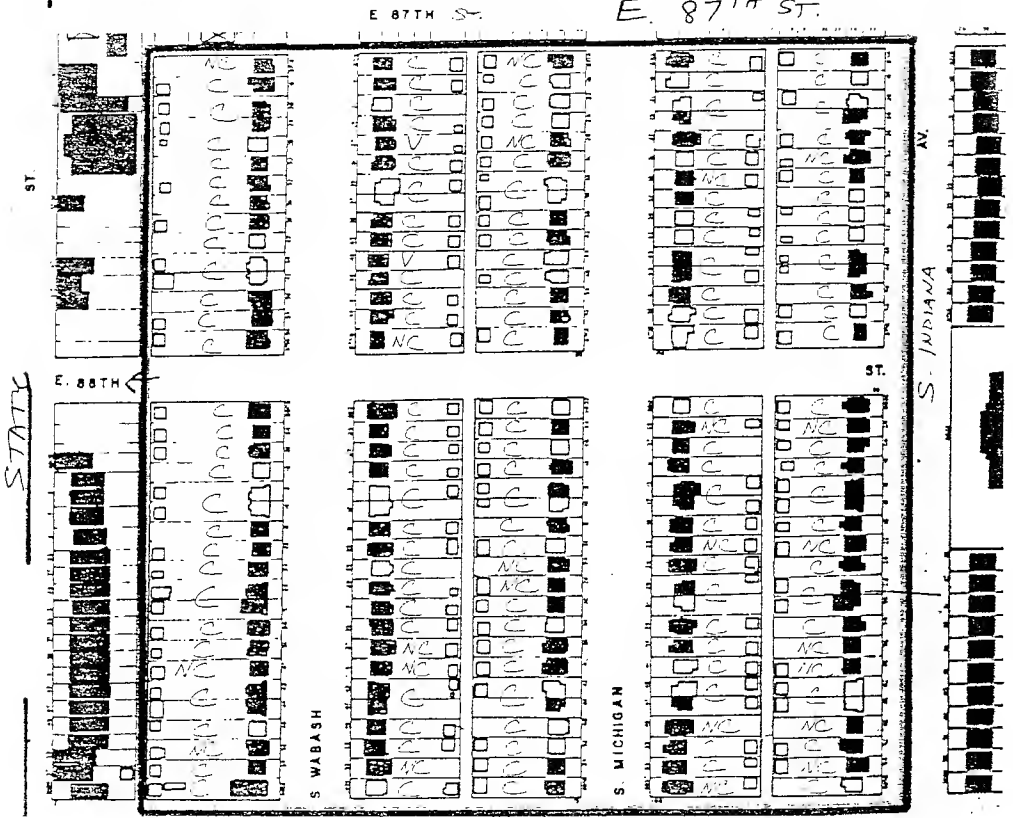
GARDEN HOMES HISTORIC DISTRICT  
CHICAGO, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

C=contributing

NC=non contributing

V=vacant

E. 87<sup>TH</sup> ST.



# ATTRACTIVE DWELLINGS ARE PLANNED FOR CITY WORKERS



Some weeks ago an account was printed in these columns of the organization of the Chicago Housing association and the acquiring of a tract of land at 37th and State streets for the site of the first buildings. Since then such rapid progress has been made that today building plans have been completed and all other arrangements made for the actual construction of a number of homes for workmen.

As plotted the subdivision will yield 35 residence lots with a depth of 300 feet and 142 lots with a depth of 162.5 feet, all having a width of 50 feet. In addition there will be a number of business lots facing on State and on 87th streets, each twenty-five feet wide, except at the corners, where the lots will be 32 feet wide.

Charles S. Frost and George C. Nimmons were secured as architects and under their supervision plans have been drawn for seven distinct types of houses. All are to be of five rooms and for the most part will be detached, although a few semi-detached dwellings have been planned to relieve the regularity of so many single houses.

These homes are to be built of fire-resisting brick or hollow tile covered with stucco. They will be of modern construction in every way and will contain all the conveniences to be looked for in a present-day dwelling of that size. Typical of the designs is one that calls for concrete basements well lighted and equipped with laundry tubs having hot and cold water. A pipeless furnace also will be installed. On the first floor is a 13 by 16 foot living room and a 11 by 16 combination kitchen and dining room. The rooms are lighted by double windows and the living room opens onto a balustrated porch 11 by 8 feet in size.

On the second floor of this type of home are three bedrooms each with a closet and a bathroom 8 feet by 6. The front bedrooms are 13 by 9 feet and 11 by 10 feet and the rear bedroom is 9 by 14 feet. Also on this floor is a commodious linen closet. All the other designs call for equally complete dwelling places.

The landscaping of "Garden Homes," as the tract has been named, is one of its most attractive features. The plans call for 100 foot streets with a wide parkway between the streets and the sidewalks. The houses are set back from the walk about 30 feet and because of the depth of the lots there is ample room in the rear for gardens. It is planned to have a caretaker remain in charge of the parkways and lots for two years to insure a good start for the bushes and trees before they are left to the mercy of the lot owners.



Types of Houses to be Sold Workingmen in "Garden Homes"

workers at a very low figure. The overhead expense has been reduced to a minimum. The housing association is firmly established financially, the money being advanced by the men who are directing the organization. A six per cent bond issue open to the public in \$100 bonds will soon be put on the market as a basis for the financing.

The buyer of a home will pay 10 per cent down and the balance in payments extending over a period of fifteen years. Provision for all contingencies has been made, including the compulsory insurance of the buyers and provision for assistance in cases of unexpected default on the part of the purchaser.

The officers of the association are:

- President, Herman H. Hettler.
- Vice-President, William Grace.
- Treasurer, Moses E. Greenebaum.
- Secretary, A. Volney Foster.
- General Counsel, Isaac Rothschild.
- General Manager, James F. Basger.

The directors are: J. Ogden Armour, Bernard P. Barassa, Col. Abel Davis, George W. Dixon, Dorr E. Felt, Charles W. Folds, A. Volney Foster, William Grace, Herman H. Hettler, D. F. Kelly, Albert D. Lasker, Minnie F. Low, Harry H. Merrick, Simon O'Donnell, Benjamin J. Rosenthal, Julius F. Smetanka, F. W. Upham, Harriet E. Virtum, Charles H. Wacker, Thomas E. Wilson, Harry A. Wheeler, William Wrigley, Jr.

To carry on the project the Chicago Real Estate Improvement company was formed. The firm of Bright & Diamond, general contractors, is in charge of the work. "Garden Homes" is but the first of the undertakings planned by the association. Ultimately it is expected thousands of such homes will be erected in various parts of the city.

## SUIT OVER WAR SUPPLIES

Perhaps the first suit of its kind and involving a large sum, has been begun in New York by two Belgians against the Holt Manufacturing company, who claim commissions amounting to \$2,188,530 for the sale of more than \$40,000,000 worth of caterpillar tractors to the Allies during the war. The complainants say that they were appointed exclusive agents in western Europe, and that in 1914 they demonstrated the tractor to Col. Swinton, of the imperial defense committee of Great Britain, who is accredited by the way with being the creator of the fighting tank. The complainants are Jules Schnerb and Joseph Wegmont of Antwerp.

The sale of the business lots is expected to pay for the cost of all the land, thus permitting the sale of the residence lots to

*Chicago Housing Association Chicago, Ill.*

# CHICAGO INDUSTRIES

CONDUCTED BY  
THE CIVIC-INDUSTRIAL COMMITTEE

## BUILD HOMES TO MAKE GOOD CITIZENS

With a sixty days probably, work will be begun on the most ambitious housing project in the history of Chicago. Philanthropy and Americanization are the inspiration of the undertaking, and those it is hoped to benefit are the poorer paid among the laboring classes, men getting less than \$150 a month and struggling to support a family. Many such now live in wretched quarters—houses old and unrepaired and crowded together to a degree that invites sickness and crime.

The Chicago Housing association has the work in hand and has acquired forty acres at Eighty-seventh and State streets on which 200 houses will be erected, each on a lot 30 by 102 feet, thus affording not only ample light and air, but space for a garden wherein the householder and his family may battle this common enemy, H. C. L., with the most effective of weapons, home grown vegetables.

The hope and the ambition of those who are supporting the undertaking are to make better Americans, more healthful, more contented and more prosperous, out of many of the foreign-born who now live in squalid neighborhoods in different parts of Chicago. The man who has a home of which he is proud has a character.

### Aid in Labor Problem

But the betterment of the individual is not the only good that is expected to result from this and subsequent similar undertakings which the organization has in mind. It is hoped to eliminate, in considerable degree at least, the cost of the tremendous labor turnover that now exists and which is a problem to every employer. Stagnate the workers by supplying them with homes and the restlessness which now characterizes many will be eradicated, it is believed, and a constant supply of manpower created.

The Chicago Housing association was

organized its champions declare, to aid many and to oppose none. There will be no competition with real estate men and commercial builders, no taking away of business or opportunities for business from any individual or any class. Further, it is expected that the advancement of the project will bring a material benefit to the surrounding property.

### Houses Will Be Attractive

In brief the plan is this. On the forty acres 200 dwellings will be built and sold to working men on the easiest possible terms. The most expensive homes will cost not over \$3,500 and the majority will range considerably below this figure. It will be possible to spread the payment over fifteen years if the purchaser cannot complete his payments in a shorter time. The streets will be one hundred feet wide and the "stifling monotony" of many neighborhoods will be avoided by a stimulating irregularity of house plans and groupings. Bill Jones' house will not be identical with John Smith's home, and both Bill and John will be encouraged to improve their yards and keep up the outward appearance of their dwellings in a beneficial rivalry to possess the best looking place in the street.

While the house may vary in size, the standard will be five rooms. All will be of brick, cement or hollow tile exterior—this point has not been decided on as yet—and none will be of frame construction. All the usual conveniences will be included and the joy of possessing one will be afforded many a family that now exists in two or three rooms where cleanliness is almost impossible and privacy unknown.

Back of the project stand a group of Chicago men and women whose support is an assurance of success. On the board of directors are the following: J. Ogden Armour, Judge Bernard T. Barasa, Col. Abel

Davis, Geo. W. Dixon, Dorr E. Felt, Chas. W. Fields, A. Volney Foster, William Grace, Herman H. Hettler, D. F. Kelly, Albert D. Lasker, Miss Minnie F. Low, Harry H. Merrick, Simon O'Donnell, Benjamin J. Rosenthal, Julius F. Smetanka, John Paul Stafford, Frederic W. Upham, Miss Harriet E. Vittum, Chas. H. Wacker, Thomas E. Wilson, Harry A. Wheeler, William Wrigley, Jr.

The officers of the association are the following:

Herman H. Hettler, president.  
William Grace, vice-president.  
M. E. Greenebaum, treasurer.

A. Volney Foster, secretary.  
The following committees have also been appointed:

**BUILDING:** William Grace, chairman; Herman H. Hettler, John Paul Stafford, Chas. E. Frost, George C. Nimmons, Leroy J. Kenevel and Benj. J. Rosenthal.  
**FINANCE:** Col. Abel Davis, chairman; A. Volney Foster, Julius F. Smetanka, Moses E. Greenebaum.

**SOCIAL SERVICE:** Miss Harriet E. Vittum, chairman; Miss S. P. Breckinridge, Miss Mary E. McDowell, Miss Minnie F. Low, Chas. W. Wrigley, Emerson O. Bradshaw, Graham Taylor.

The launching of this project has an industrial and social aspect. The best known social workers have been enlisted in this cause. While each individual will pay for and own his house, there will be a community interest which will find expression through a community house which will be built for each group. Likewise each community will be developed along the lines of artistic unity.

This project is in no sense commercial. It is intended to stimulate the general movement toward acquiring homes. This association intends to reach people who for various reasons, are unable to meet the ordinary commercial requirements.



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Garden Homes Historic District

37-14-3 C  
25-3

W. 1/2 N. W. 1/4 Sec. 3 - 37-14  
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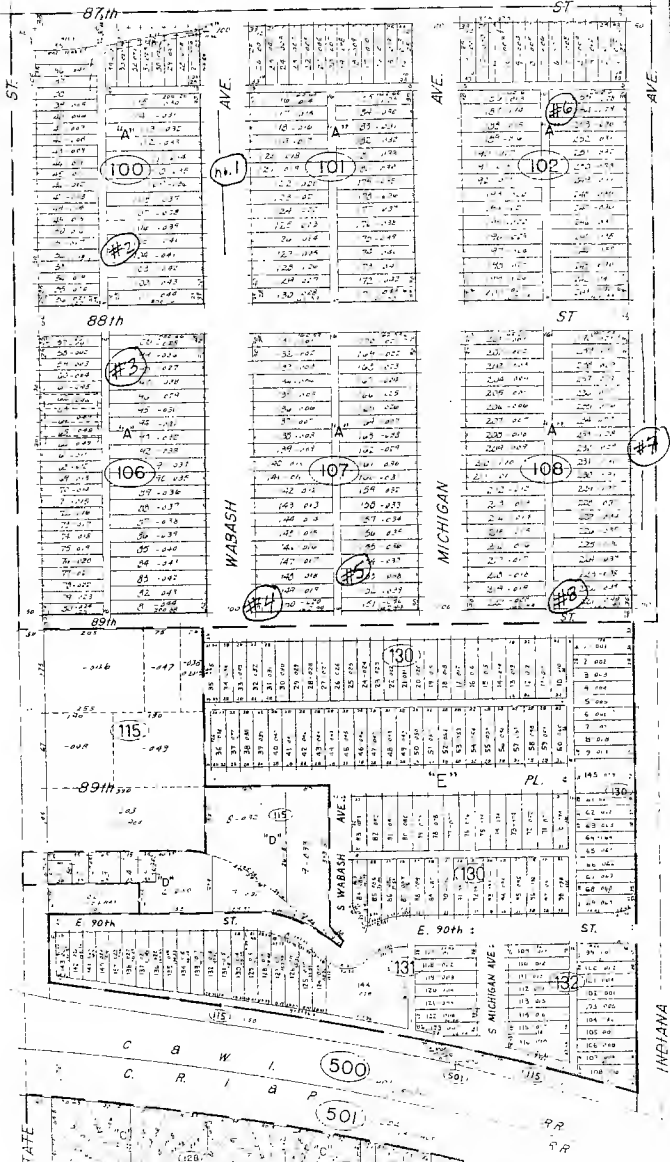
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Rec. May 16 1893

2. BEALL AND LINDSAY, OWNERS, a subdivision of part of the E. W. 1/4 of Sec. 14, T. 14 N., R. 14 W., 1914. Doc. 2284274  
Rec. May 20 1914

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Rec. May 20 1914

5. THE LINDSAY TRUST, a trust of the S. W. 1/4 of Sec. 3, T. 14 N., R. 14 W., 1914. Doc. 2284274  
Rec. May 20 1914



INDIANA



December 6, 2004

Tracey A. Sculle  
Survey & National Register Coordinator  
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
1 Old State Capitol  
Springfield, IL 62702

City of Chicago  
Richard M. Daley, Mayor

Department of Planning  
and Development

Denise M. Casalino, P.E.  
Commissioner

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Chicago, Illinois 60602  
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<http://www.cityofchicago.org>

**Re: Chicago nominations to the National Register of Historic Places for**

- **Chicago Club, 81 E. Van Buren**
- **Garden Homes Historic District, roughly bounded by S. Wabash Ave., E. 87<sup>th</sup> St., S. Indiana Ave., and E. 89<sup>th</sup> St.**
- **The Narragansett, 1640 E. 50<sup>th</sup> St.**

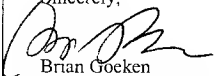
Dear Ms. Sculle:

This is in response to your letters of September 8 and November 3, 2004, to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks asking for the Commission's comments on the nominations of the properties referenced above to the National Register of Historic Places. As a Certified Local Government (CLG), the City of Chicago is given the opportunity to comment on local nominations to the National Register prior to being considered by the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council.

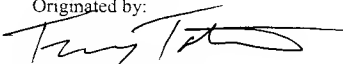
At its regular meeting of December 2, 2004, the Commission voted unanimously to support the National Register listings for all three nominations. The Commission's resolution is attached.

Please contact Terry Tatum of my staff at 312-744-9147 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

  
Brian Goeken  
Deputy Commissioner  
Landmarks Division

Originated by:

  
Terry Tatum  
Director of Research  
Landmarks Division

encl.

cc: Alderman Madeline L. Haightcock, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward  
Alderman Toni Preckwinkle, 4<sup>th</sup> Ward  
Alderman Freddrenna M. Lyle, 6<sup>th</sup> Ward  
Jennifer Kenney and Victoria Granicki, Granicki Historical Consultants  
Jean Guarino  
Susan Benjamin and Jean Follett, Benjamin Historic Certifications  
Chicago Club  
David Guyer, Narragansett Condominium Association  
Judy Minor-Jackson, Department of Planning and Development  
Terri Haymaker, Department of Planning and Development



Resolution  
by the  
Commission on Chicago Landmarks  
on the  
Nominations to the National Register of Historic Places  
for

**Chicago Club, 81 E. Van Buren**

**Garden Homes Historic District,  
Roughly bounded by S. Wabash Ave. , E. 87<sup>th</sup> St., S. Indiana Ave., and E. 89<sup>th</sup> St.**

**The Narragansett, 1640 E. 50<sup>th</sup> St.**

December 2, 2004

The Commission on Chicago Landmarks finds that:

- the Chicago Club meets Criterion A for commerce, social history, and entertainment and recreation and Criterion C for architecture as a handsome Romanesque Revival-style club building housing a club of significance to the history of Chicago; and that
- the Garden Homes Historic District meets Criterion A for community planning and development as Chicago's first large-scale subsidized housing project; and that
- the Narragansett meets Criteria C for architecture as an excellent Art Deco-style high-rise apartment building.

*Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks that it hereby supports the listing of all three nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.*



# Illinois Historic Preservation Agency

1 Old State Capitol Plaza • Springfield, Illinois 62701-1507 • Teletypewriter Only (217) 524-7128

Voice (217) 782-4836

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Richard M. Daley, City of Chicago  
Brian Goeken, Landmarks Division, Department of Planning and  
Development

FROM: Tracey A. Sculle, Survey and National Register Coordinator

DATE: September 8, 2004 *TAS*

SUBJECT: Preliminary Opinion on the Garden Homes Historic District

The Garden Homes Historic District is a very distinct area of 152 houses in Chicago's Chatham Community Area. The district is roughly bounded by South Wabash Avenue on the west, East 87<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, South Indiana on the east and East 89<sup>th</sup> Street on the south. The two-story brick cottages and stucco-clad duplexes were built between 1919 and 1920. The houses in the district represent the same five-room floor plan with varying rooflines. The Garden Homes Historic District was developed by the Chicago Housing Association, based on façade designs by architect Charles S. Frost and built by local contractors, Bright & Diamond. The district meets Criterion A for community planning and development, as it was the city's first large-scale subsidized housing project and a creative attempt by some of Chicago's most important philanthropists to help workers achieve home ownership. The period of significance for the historic district is 1919-1920, the years when the homes were constructed.

While some of the original features and materials of the houses in the Garden Homes Historic District have changed over time, the area represents a distinct neighborhood of residences on large lots by Chicago standards that have remarkable cohesiveness with very few of the historic homes demolished. Most importantly, the Garden Homes Historic District represents Chicago's earliest large scale subsidized housing and clearly retains the essential form and features that reflect the various types of houses designed to fill this housing development. It is my opinion that the Garden Homes Historic District retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic merit and is an excellent candidate for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Tracey Sculle  
03/11/2005 03:14 PM

To: Terri Malawy/HPA/ILL@ILL, Amy Easton/HPA/ILL@ILL  
cc:  
Subject: Fw: National Register Weekly List 03/11/2005

Illinois properties

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----- Forwarded by Tracey Sculle/HPA/ILL on 03/11/2005 03:12 PM -----



Edson\_Beall@nps.gov  
03/10/2005 12:35 PM

To:  
cc: WASO\_CR\_NRHE@nps.gov. (bcc: Tracey Sculle/HPA/ILL)  
Subject: Fw: National Register Weekly List 03/11/2005

March 11, 2005

The Director of the National Park Service is pleased to send you the following announcements and actions on properties for the National Register of Historic Places. For further information contact Edson Beall via voice (202) 354-2255, E-mail: Edson\_Beall@nps.gov

Our physical location address is:

National Park Service 2280  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW,  
Washington D.C. 20005

Please have any Fed Ex, UPS packages sent to the above address. Please continue to use alternate carriers, as all mail delivered to us via United States Postal Service is irradiated and subsequently damaged.

Visit the National Registers Amistad Travel Itinerary

The National Park Services National Register of Historic Places invites you to explore the newest online travel itinerary, Amistad: Seeking Freedom in Connecticut, at <http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/>. The plight of the Mende Africans who fought for their freedom from a Spanish slave ship caught the attention of America in the 1840s, and continues to hold our attention today. This travel itinerary highlights 14 historic places listed in the National Register of Historic Places that tell the story of the Amistad and the Mende Africans legal battle and quest for freedom in Connecticut. This travel itinerary, complete with information on the historic sites, what times to visit them, and other tourist links, was created in partnership with the communities of Farmington, Hartford, New Haven and New London, Connecticut, the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers.

WEEKLY LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PROPERTIES: 2/27/05 THROUGH 3/04/05

KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number, NHL, Action, Date, Multiple Name

CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES COUNTY,  
Avenel Cooperative Housing Project,



2339-2349 Avenel St.,  
Los Angeles, 05000070,  
LISTED, 2/27/05

CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO COUNTY,  
Holzwasser--Walker Scott Building and Owl Drug Building,  
1014 Fifth Ave. and 402-416 Broadway,  
San Diego, 05000072,  
LISTED, 2/27/05

CALIFORNIA, SANTA CLARA COUNTY,  
Saratoga Foothill Club,  
20399 Park Place,  
Saratoga, 05000069,  
LISTED, 2/27/05

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY,  
Chicago Club,  
31 East Van Buren St.,  
Chicago, 05000109,  
LISTED, 2/28/05

\* ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY,  
Garden Homes Historic District,  
Roughly bounded by S. Wabash Ave., E. 87th St., S. Indiana Ave. and E. 89ths,  
Chicago vicinity, 05000108,  
LISTED, 2/28/05

ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY,  
Glasner, William A., House,  
850 Sheridan Rd.,  
Glencoe, 05000105,  
LISTED, 2/28/05

ILLINOIS, WINNEBAGO COUNTY,  
Rockford Elk's Lodge #64,  
210 W. Jefferson,  
Rockford, 05000113,  
LISTED, 2/28/05

MISSOURI, ST LOUIS, INDEPENDENT CITY,  
South St. Louis Historic Working and Middle Class Streetcar Suburbs, MPS  
St. Louis, 04500914,  
COVER DOCUMENTATION ACCEPTED, 3/02/05

PENNSYLVANIA, CHESTER COUNTY,  
West Chester Historic District (Boundary Increase),  
Roughly bounded by West Chester's northern boundary, Poplar St., East Rosedale  
Ave., and South Bradford Ave.,  
West Chester, 05000096,  
LISTED, 2/27/05

WISCONSIN, MILWAUKEE COUNTY,  
Prospect Hill Historic District,  
2790 blk. of N. Hackett Ave., N. Shepard Ave., N. Summit Ave. and 2804-06 E.  
Park Place,  
Milwaukee, 05000104,  
LISTED, 3/01/05